



# Nazareth Area School District

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## INFORMATIONAL ALERT: MOMO CHALLENGE AND OTHER ONLINE CHALLENGES

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are reaching out to alert you about reports of a re-emerging and potentially dangerous online challenge called the **Momo Challenge**. The Momo Challenge, like other online fads, tends to grow rapidly and become more widespread due to the ease of instant communication through social media and word of mouth.

If you research the Momo Challenge, you will find information that reports it as a form of cyberbullying, spread through social media and cell phones. This challenge is reportedly sent to phone users, who are enticed to contact a user named "Momo" through the social media messaging app WhatsApp. They reportedly may begin to receive graphic threats from the user and are instructed to perform a series of dangerous tasks, which may include acts of self-harm.

It is unclear as to whether this challenge exists as it is reported, or if it is more of a hoax being spread rapidly, playing on our fears associated with such a dangerous challenge. Students can easily access Momo Challenge videos on YouTube.

The District is aware that students are discussing the Momo Challenge with their friends, and we will continue to monitor and address unsafe conversations and internet searches during the regular school day.

We encourage parents/guardians to speak with their children about dangerous online challenges. With the immediate access that students have to information, along with the powerful allure of social media, we know it is difficult to fully monitor their online behaviors. We do encourage all parents/guardians to keep a watchful eye on their students' apps and the social media content they are sending and receiving.

Dangerous online challenges tend to reemerge from time to time. Some dangerous challenges to watch out for include:

- The Blue Whale Challenge – encourages dangerous acts and acts of self-harm
- The Tide Pod Challenge – encourages biting into Tide Pods
- The Choking/Fainting/Pass out Challenge – encourages getting a high from choking or hyperventilating
- The 48 Hour Challenge (NEW) – encourages teens/individuals to go missing for 2 days.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Dennis L. Riker, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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